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REPORT

Jun 1977

OF THE

GOVERNOR OF MONTANA

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FOR

THE YEAR 1881.



WASHINGTON:
GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE.
1881.



ERRATA.

On page 4, under the head of "Surveys and Preëmption Laws," the 9th line, for the word *brush*, as printed, substitute the word *bench*.

On page 5, under the head of "Timber Lands," 16th line, omit the word *waste*.

On page 7, under the head of "Indebtedness," 7th line, between the words *justice* and *supporting*, insert the word *and*.

On page 8, under heading of "The Mormons," after sentence closed in the ninth line, read as follows:—

Permit me, in addition to disfranchising, to urge one further disqualification which Congress should impose on polygamists,— that they be debarred from entering homesteads or preëmption claims upon public lands, thereby preventing the spread of this curse in the Territories. The people in Montana are intensely interested in this Mormon problem, and are keenly alive to the dangers existing from want of prompt and radical legislation to prevent its growth in the new Northwest.

On page 8, under the head of "The Chinese," 4th line, instead of *heathens* read *heathen*.

On page 10, 25th line, for the word *his*, as printed, substitute the word *its*.

On page 11, the following statement has been omitted.

U. S. ASSAY OFFICE.

Statement of gross value of gold and silver bullion deposited, by months, at the U. S. assay office, at Helena Mont., for one year, ending October 31st, 1883:

1882	November	\$63,224.86
"	December	19,694.95
1883	January	50,354.77
"	February	27,665.54
"	March	25,232.22
"	April	37,557.23
"	May	41,607.08
"	June	81,144.10
"	July	109,878.05
"	August	95,187.99
"	September	94,548.23
"	October	79,621.13
Total		\$725,716.15

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REPORT OF THE GOVERNOR OF MONTANA.

TERRITORY OF MONTANA, EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT,
Helena, October 13, 1881.

SIR: In compliance with the request contained in your communication of September 19, A. D. 1881, I have the honor to submit the following:

The somewhat exhaustive report made by this office in 1878 covers many points in relation to Montana and its resources that need not be repeated.

The year ending June 30, 1881, was much less prosperous than former years. The yield of agricultural products was below the average of previous years, and the winter was the severest experienced since the settlement of the Territory. The loss of stock, cattle, and sheep was very large, aggregating at least 25 per cent. The loss of horses was very small, demonstrating that such stock can winter on our ranges with more certainty of success than any other. Stock-growing has been the leading industry of the Territory for years, and the profits of the same have averaged, when well managed, at least 30 per cent. per annum; but in view of the losses of the past year, and the scarcity of feed on the ranges on account of the large amount of stock and the unfavorable season, stock-raising with large profits has become very uncertain, and many will soon abandon the business. The capacity of our ranges to graze stock during the entire year without hay or grain is limited, and the stock owner must soon be prepared to feed during the winter season, which will detract largely from the profits of the business.

The owners of stock on the northern border of our settlements, in the vicinity of Forts Benton and Maginnis, have lost largely during the past winter and spring from Indian depredations. British Indians from north of the line, and our reservation Indians, habitually roam through our northern settlements stealing horses, killing cattle, and robbing unprotected settlers of their scanty supplies. This condition of affairs has existed for some time, and the Army has not been able to afford the settlers that protection a great government like ours should guarantee its humblest citizen. I have repeatedly called the attention of the department to this subject without eliciting a reply. The sturdy Western pioneer cannot always be forbearing and patient under such great wrongs unredressed by the government. If the Indian depredations continue I fear a collision will take place, and no one can predict the evil which may result.

I respectfully beseech the government, on behalf of the settlers of Northern Montana, that the Indians be required to remain on their reservations and not depart therefrom unless under military escort. I invite the attention of the department to the letters of Hon. Martin Maginnis, Delegate in Congress from Montana, and of citizens on this

subject, now on file in the department, and sincerely hope some favorable action may be taken by the government.

The yield of grain and vegetables is large. The average yield of wheat per acre is 30 bushels; oats, 40 to 50; potatoes, 200 to 300. Pease, carrots, and turnips are raised in great abundance. The tame grasses are being cultivated with success. Agriculture cannot be successfully pursued without irrigation, and a large portion of the agricultural land will never be cultivated until a general system of irrigation is adopted. A very small part of the arable land of the Territory is under cultivation, and no land has any real value without sufficient water to irrigate the same. The richest soil is worthless without water, and thin soil will produce a fair crop with it.

There is no exportation of agricultural products. Wheat is worth \$1.40 per bushel, oats 65 cents, barley \$1.10, potatoes 60 cents, carrots 50 cents, and turnips 40 cents in Helena market. The climate and soil are well adapted to the cultivation of wheat, oats, rye, barley, and all kinds of vegetables grown in the Western States, and an average crop of corn can be raised in our lowest valleys.

The increase of population since the last census will reach 20 per cent. The immigration to the Territory is largely from the Eastern and Western States, with a small foreign immigration, and all appear intent on making their homes with us. The growth of the Territory is in all respects healthy and satisfactory.

The mines are yielding good profits to their owners, new mines are being almost daily discovered, and old ones rapidly developed.

The climate is exceedingly healthy, with no prevalent diseases to which people are subject. The facilities for travel and transportation are improving. The Utah and Northern Railway has been completed two hundred miles in the Territory from the south, and the Northern Pacific Railroad has entered our border from the east, and is being rapidly constructed across the Territory towards its western terminus. Coaches carrying passengers and the United States mail connect with the railroads and our principal cities and towns, and the time is not distant when nearly every point in the Territory will be reached by railroads.

The educational system of this Territory is good; no Territory can boast of better schools or more competent teachers, and no people sustain the free-school system with more unanimity than do the people of Montana. The Territory contains all the elements to make it a rich and prosperous commonwealth.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

B. F. POTTS,
Governor of Montana.

Hon. S. J. KIRKWOOD,
Secretary of the Interior, Washington, D. C.